

REMARKS

Claims 4 and 8 are amended herein. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-13 will be pending in the above-referenced Application.

Claims 4-7, 9, and 11

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejections of claims 4-7, 9, and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,281,552 (Kawasaki). As amended, claims 4-7, 9, and 11 recite forming a protective insulating film **directly on and in physical contact with** the precursor film **without using an etching process**, and forming an interlayer insulating film on the protective insulating film.

Kawasaki discloses a TFT having LDD regions, including the following characteristics. A crystalline silicon film 106, which the Office Action identifies as the precursor film, is formed. Then, spacer films 107 to 109 are formed through etching (column 6, lines 37-38) and disposed directly on the film 106, followed by the covering of the spacer films 107-109 and the film 106 by spacer film 110 (column 6, lines 36-40). Next, detailed doping and etching processes occur (column 6 line 41 - column 7, line 32). Then, by etching, the spacer films 107-109 and the protective spacer film 110 are removed and the film 106 is divided into islands (column 7, lines 36-38). After the etching of films 106-109, protective film 150 is provided on the formed source, drain, and channel regions. During the Kawasaki process of creating a TFT, there are times when the crystalline silicon film is exposed.

Kawasaki does not disclose or suggest forming a protective insulating film directly on and **in physical contact with** said precursor film without using an etching process, and forming an interlayer insulating film on the protective insulating film.

Further, the Office Action identifies protective spacer film 110 as being inherently equivalent to the "protective insulating film" of claim 4. Kawasaki contradicts this identification by expressly identifying a "protective insulating film 150," at column 8, lines 12-14. In any event, neither the spacer film 110 nor the insulating film 150 is formed directly on and **in physical contact with** a precursor film as claimed.

Also, the Office Action asserts that Kawasaki discloses, "forming a protective spacer film (110) on the precursor film (106) *without using an etching process.*" Kawasaki contradicts this assertion by expressly showing etching processes intermediate the forming of the crystalline silicon film 106 (column 6, line 10) and the introduction of the second spacer film 110 (column 6, lines 39-40), at column 6, lines 36-39, as well as regarding the transformation of the crystalline silicon film layer into islands before introducing protective film 150, at column 7, lines 36-38.

Because Kawasaki does not disclose all of the elements of claims 4-7, 9, and 11, the rejections are improper. Accordingly, Applicant requests the section 103 rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 8

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawasaki in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,063,654 (Ohtani). As amended, claim 8 recites forming a laminate on the gate insulating film comprising forming a precursor film for an active layer, and forming a protective insulating film **directly** on and in physical contact with the precursor film.

Kawasaki discloses a TFT having LDD regions as stated above regarding claims 4-7, 9, and 11. Ohtani discloses a TFT manufacturing process, including provision of a gate insulating film 108 and an interlayer insulating film 114. These references, separately and in combination, do not disclose or suggest forming a laminate on the gate insulating film comprising forming a precursor film for an active layer and forming a protective insulating film **directly** on the precursor film.

Because Kawasaki and Ohtani, individually and in combination, do not show or suggest all of the elements of claim 8, the rejection of it is improper. Accordingly, Applicant requests the Section 103 rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 13

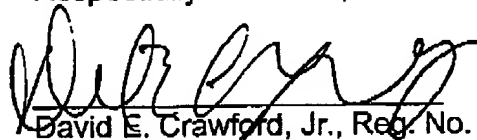
Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection of claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawasaki in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,420,758 (Nakajima). Because claim 13 depends on "any one of claims 4-9," and

the rejections of claims 4-9 should be withdrawn as shown above, the rejection of claim 13 is also improper. Accordingly, Applicant requests the Section 103 rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

As it is believed the application is in condition for allowance, favorable action and a Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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